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MELROSE ABBEY,

WITH

Notes Descriptive and Historical.

By J. WASS,
Custodian of the Abbey.

TWELFTH EDITION.

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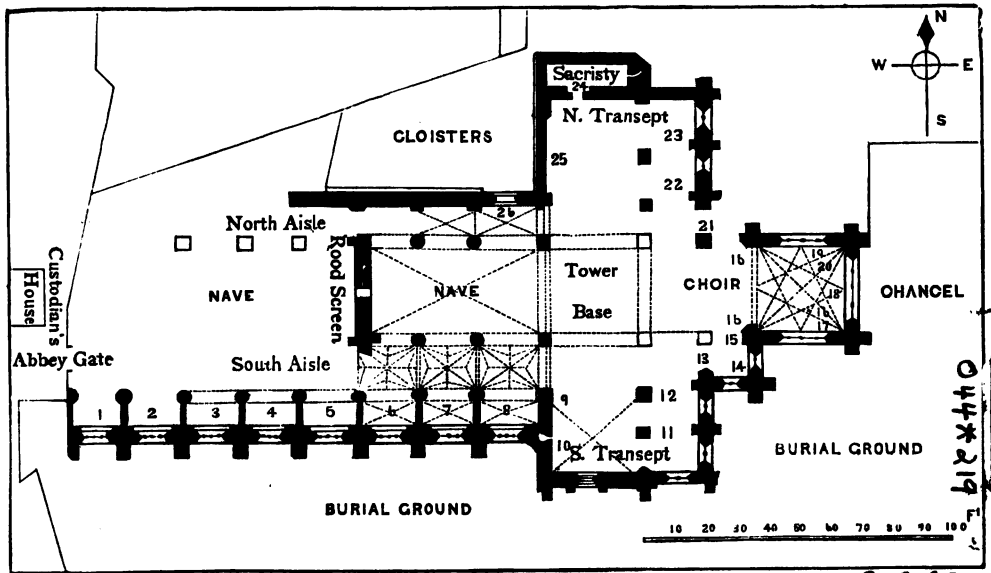

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MELROSE ABBEY.

THE GROUND PLAN ILLUSTRATED.

VISITORS on entering St Mary's are respectfully requested to keep to the right hand all round.

Nos. 1 to 8—Chapels facing south aisle.

9 and 10—Door of stair, and John Murdo's inscription.

11 and 12—St Bridget's Chapel and statue, still standing.

13—Chapel.

14—Tomb of Michael Scott, the "Wizard," according to the "Lay."

15—Tomb of Sir Ralph Ivers or Evers, killed at Ancrum Moor, 1545, and probably "Latoun" lies here also.

16—Chancel.

17—Tomb of Alexander II. (petrified tombstone).

18—Rest of the heart of Robert the Bruce.

19 and 20—William Douglas, "the dark Knight of Liddesdale;" Douglas the hero of Otterburn, or "Chevy Chase;" and many of this heroic and illustrious race, were interred here.

21—Chapel, north-east end destroyed.

22 and 23—St Stephen's Chapel.

24—Entrance to Sacristy. Under the lower step is the tomb of Queen Johanna, wife of Alexander II.

25—Font at foot of Abbot's staircase.

26—Cloister door. To the left of it, on the wall, the inscription, "Here lies the race of the House of Zair" (Yair). Opposite are the tombs of the ancient family of Karr, Kar, Ker, Kerr, of Kippilaw.

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Melrose Abbey.

MELROSE ABBEY is in form — like all ancient churches, such as that venerable pile Westminster Abbey, and St Paul's Cathedral, and St Peter's at Rome—symbolical of, and represents the cross, and stands due east and west, and was dedicated to St Mary. Visitors on entering this ancient monastery cannot help having their admiration riveted by its former greatness, and by the exquisite beauty of the foliage tracery, grotesque corbels, and other ornamental sculpture. The workmanship is unexampled, and must excite wonder, "notwithstanding the march of intellect" of the nineteenth century. Melrose Abbey unquestionably affords one of the finest specimens of Gothic sculpture and Gothic architecture which this country can boast of, and though it may not be the most entire, it may fairly rank among the most beautiful of all the ecclesiastical ruins which lie scattered throughout this reformed land.

It is an object of uncommon attraction, and possessed of infinite grace, fine in its general aspect as in its minutest details. The beauty of Melrose Abbey,

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however, is not that which proceeds from the flush of health, but from the fatal though flattering symptoms of decay; not the beauty of summer, but the melancholy grace of autumn:—

"So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,
We start, for soul is wanting there;
Its is the loneliness in death
That parts not quite with parting breath,
But beauty with that fearful bloom,
The hue which haunts it to the tomb;
Expression's last receding ray,
A gilded halo hovering round decay." *

The eye is not dazzled in the contemplation of the ruins of Melrose Abbey (by its perfect splendour), but riveted in admiration of the mouldering fragment that shadows forth the matchless whole which has been, and whose merits we are, from this imperfect specimen, completely disposed to allow.

"Within the pile no common dead
Lay blended with their kindred mould;
Theirs was the hearts that prayed or bled,
In cloister dim or death-plain red,
The pious and the bold.

High the resolves that fill the brain,
With transports trembling upon pain;
When the vale of time is rent in twain,
That hides the glory past,
The scene may fade that gave them birth,
But they perish not with the perishing earth,
For ever they shall last.

Thus even where Death his empire keeps,
Life holds the pageant vain,
And where the lofty spirit sleeps,
There lofty visions reign.

* Byron.

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In hours of loneliness and woe,
Which even the best and wisest know,
How leaps the lightened heart to seize
On the bliss that comes with dreams like these
As fair before the mental eye !

The pomp and beauty of the dream return.
Rejected Virtue calms her sigh,
And leans resigned on Memory's urn."

SOUTH AISLE AND NAVE.

Entering at the west end of the Abbey, immediately to the right are the side chapels (numbers upon ground plan 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8), and which formed the outer portions of the south aisle. Three of these chapels have been roofless for generations, and their separating walls are only slightly visible above-ground, but the roofs over the fourth and fifth are still entire. The remains of the rood or organ screen cross the nave on a line with the division of the fifth and sixth chapels, and from here to the transept the church is quite roofed over from north to south. The aisles, both north and south, are still covered by the original groined roof. In 1618 part of the ruin was fitted up as the parish church, and continued to be used for that purpose until 1810. The roof over the nave on the north side, reaching to and supporting the original groined roof, is the work of 1618. There are still in each of the side chapels the piscinæ in which the vessels used during mass were afterwards washed. The first six of the chapels in the south aisle have been used since the Reformation as burial-places by noted families in the neighbourhood. No. 1 on the

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ground plan is that of the Bostons of Gattonside, whose ancestors in olden times held their land of the Abbey of Melrose, and were closely related by marriage to some of the dignitaries of that church. High on the wall to the west is the following eloquent and impressive inscription:—

THE DUST OF MANY GENERATIONS OF THE BOSTONS OF GATTONSIDE IS DEPOSITED IN THIS PLACE. WE GIVE OUR BODIES TO THIS HOLY ABBEY TO KEEP.

No. 2. In this chapel the names of those interred are not given.

No. 3. In this there is an upright stone with an inscription upon it, not legible now, but it has been copied and reads thus,—

Hic jacet honorablis vir George. Halliburton * * * 1. Octobr. Ano. D. M. M.D.XXX.

No. 4. In this is the burial-place of the "Pringles of Yair," and contains six compartments. Two interments have taken place within the last seven years. Upon the left on the wall the sculpture bears date 1830, and was executed by a local craftsman. On the floor are two inscriptions worthy of note. The front one to the left reads thus,—

HEIR LIES OF GUID MEMORIE DAME MARGARET KER, FIRST WYFE . TO . JAMES . PRINGIL . OF . WODHOUS . AND . EFTER . HIS DECEIS . MAREIT SIR . DAVID HOME . OF WODDERBURNE . KNYCHT . QUHA . DECEISSIT . THE . 24 . OF . FEBRUARE . ANNO . D . 1589.

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The second inscription, at the back, to the right reads thus,—

HEIR LYES ANE HONORABLE VOMAN CRISTIN LUNDIE SPOUS TO JAMES * * * * QUYTBANK SCHO DECEISSIT 19 . JULY . 1602. LAMENT FOR SYN AND STYL THOU MURN FOR THE CLAY * * * * * YE MAN TURN.

No. 5. The next division forms the burial-place of the "Scotts of Gala" and the "Pringles of Galashiels;" their ancestors an honourable and ancient family. A monumental stone, put up only recently in memory of the late Major Scott of Gala, is very finely chiselled in imitation of the carving in the cloisters. The effigy of one of their ancestors, the Baron of Smailholm, is to be seen here wrapped in his grave-clothes. Near this figure is an inscription which reads thus,—

HEIR LEIS ANE HONOURABIL MAN ANDRO PRINGIL FEUAR OF GALLOSCHIELS QUHA DECESIT YE 28 . OF FEBRUARE AN. DOM. 1585.

No. 6. The keystones of the roof and capitals of the pillars are worthy of much attention. David Fletcher, minister of the parish, lies buried here. A Latin inscription, on the wall to the right, says that he was a faithful pastor, as well as other things. It is dated 1665. This person ultimately was made Bishop of Ross.

No. 7. In this chapel are carved representations of

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three heads. The one in the centre, from its size, was most probably the centre boss under the roof of the tower. Those right and left of it represent the heads of David I. and of his wife Queen Matilda. The window in this chapel is worthy of attention.

No. 8. In this chapel, standing upright, is an ancient kneeling stone; on the side of it, towards the west, are carved four horseshoes;* and on the top is an inscription in Saxon characters, which reads thus,—

✠ Orate pro Anima Frat. Petri. Aerarii.

Which is, "Pray for the soul of brother Peter the treasurer."

High up on the west wall of this chapel is the following inscription:—

Niniani: Patine.
Thome: Pauli: Cuthbi.
te: s: Petre: Petigin.

The capitals of the pillars of the south aisle are all in excellent preservation and of exquisite workmanship. They generally represent wreaths of flowers and leaves of well-known plants, with a correctness which does not fail to elicit remembrance of the subjects of imitation.

SOUTH TRANSEPT.

The finest specimen of carving is seen here on the capital of the pillar which bounds the south aisle on

* They were thought to possess a charm, and to be capable of counteracting evil and covetous wishes.

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the east—which separates the aisle from the nave,—and is pronounced to be so by connoisseurs. This carving represents the "curly greens," or kale, grown in every garden almost in Scotland, and is as delicately executed as the natural leaf. The pillar on which appears this beautiful specimen of monastic taste and skill rises on the north side to another capital, at the spring of the beautiful and lofty arch which, with three others, supported the central tower. From the south transept, where this carving is generally best seen, can also be observed, high up in the wall of the north transept, a small round window, the tracing of which is entire. This window is said to represent the "Crown of Thorns." About three feet below the sill of the grand south window, along the wall, is continued a narrow gallery or passage, which is lighted by the clerestory windows. This passage led from north to south of the chancel round the whole church. The bases of the balustrade of this part of the passage are quaintly carved figures of musicians, and are said to represent the angelic choir. There is a door in the west side of this transept; immediately over it in the centre are the compasses and fleur-de-lis on a shield. At each side of these, and a little down the north side of the door, is an inscription, which is as follows:—

SA GAES YE COMPASS EVEN ABOUT, SA TRUTH AND LAUTE DO BUT DOUTE. BEHALDE TO YE HENDE Q JOHN MORVO.

To the left, higher on the wall, is another inscription,

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which tells who this John was, and what he had to do with the Abbey at Melrose. It is as follows:—

JOHN MOROW : SUM TYME : CALLIT :
WAS : I : AND BORN : IN PARYSEE :
CERTAINLY : AND HAD : IN : KEPPING :
ALL : MASON : WORK : OF : SANTAN :
DRUYS : YE : HYE : KYRK : OF : GLASGU :
MELROS : AND : PASLEY : OF :
NYDDYSDAYLL : AND : OF : GALWAY :
I : PRAY : TO : GOD : AND : MARY : BAITH :
AND : SWEET : ST : JOHN : KEEP : THIS : HALY :
KIRK : FRAE : SKAITH :

John Murdo, or Murdoch, as the name probably should be, is claimed as the first Master of the Freemason Lodge at Melrose, which with Kilwinning is said to be the oldest in Scotland.

To the east of this transept, and separated from it by three pillars, is St Bridget's Chapel, and a statue of that saint is still standing on a pedestal in a niche near one of the windows.

Sir William Douglas of Lothian was buried before St Bridget's altar; and William, Earl of Douglas, left money for masses to be said continuously for his soul.*

Next to St Bridget's Chapel, and between it and the chancel, is another aisle, which was used as a separate chapel, and it is supposed that originally there were sixteen altars in the Abbey. In this corner is, according to the "Lay of the Last

* Chart. Mel.

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Minstrel," the grave of the famous wizard, Michael Scott. At the foot of the grave is a figure, the head of which is one of the bosses; this the uncritical are pleased to regard as the very likeness of the Wizard himself. This individual, by his "dark magic," it is said, divided the Eildon Hill into "three," as you now see them in the vicinity of the Abbey. Next to the Wizard's grave, on the left, is the grave of Sir Ralph Ivers or Evers, one of the English commanders slain at the battle of Ancrum Moor. The inscription on the stone, not very legible, runs thus,—

ORATE : : : ANIMA IVOORS DE CORBI-RCEG.

On the opposite side of a footpath at the head of these graves, on the north-east side of a heap of fragments, is a stone which was used as a favourite seat by the late Sir Walter Scott, when he came to contemplate the magnificent eastern window, and to feast on the grand and varied beauty of the scene.

THE CHANCEL.

The choir, or chancel, displays the finest architectural taste. The elegance and beauty of the eastern window, whether viewed from without in unison with the rest of the building, or from within in conjunction with the slender shafts of shapely stone which so gracefully support the roof of the edifice, are equally striking, and well merit the poetical tribute paid by Sir Walter Scott, whose "Lay" has been frequently carried to the high altar, and perused by the pale moonlight, at the fabled grave of the wizard Michael Scott, even at the "witching time of

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night." Sir Walter Scott, in describing this part of the building, says,—

> "The moon on the east oriel shone
> Through slender shafts of shapely stone
> By foliaged tracery combined;
> Thou would'st have thought some fairy's hand
> 'Twixt populars straight the ozier wand
> In many a freakish knot had twined,
> Then framed a spell, when the work was done,
> And changed the willow wreaths to stone."

The original beautifully fretted and sculptured stone roof of the east end of the chancel is still standing; and, rising high, under the floor repose the ashes of many of the illustrious dead. Alexander II. was buried here; and also "Waldevus," the second abbot of the monastry. Waldevus was much beloved, and was a man of holy life, and had a remarkably gentle and lenient disposition. The body of Douglas, the dark Knight of Liddesdale, otherwise called the Flower of Chivalry, who was slain by a kinsman in Ettrick Forest, whilst hunting, during the reign of David the Second, was brought here for interment, after lying one night in Lindean Kirk. James, Earl Douglas, slain by Hotspur (Earl Percy), at the battle of Otterburn in 1388, was also interred here, with great military pomp and every honour that could be paid by the abbot and monks. In 1544 the English, under Sir Ralph Evers and Sir Brian Latoun, spoiled the tombs of the Douglases, and for this insult, in the following year, they suffered severe retribution at the battle of Ancrum Moor.

But the chief deposit, here also, is the "heart of

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King Robert Bruce," brought back from Spain by Sir William Keith, after Douglas had made an unsuccessful attempt to carry it to the Holy Land. In the king's last letter to his son, written about a month before his death, he commanded that his heart should be buried in "Melrose Abbey." But subsequent to that he wished rather that it might be sent to Palestine, and buried in the Holy Sepulchre. Sir James Douglas was entrusted with the sacred deposit, and set sail with a numerous and splendid retinue. He encountered the Saracens in Spain, and being too brave to retreat, he was overpowered by numbers and killed. The body was recovered, and brought back for burial in the midst of his ancestors; and the heart of the master he loved and served so well, was interred, agreeably with the former wish of the king, under the high altar of Melrose Abbey.

On the roof of the church the carving is very beautiful. The keystones are ornamented with subjects taken from Scripture history; on the centre stone is one supporting the crucifix; and on the surrounding stones are figures with swords and staves, and some with crosses. The intersections of the groins are ornamented with large beautiful knots of flowers.

Looking from the chancel can best be seen the only portion of the central tower, the western side of which alone is remaining. It is said that the pillars supporting the tower on the east were torn down by the English during the incursions of the Earl of Hertford in 1545. The three chancel windows are very beautiful; the one to the south is singularly so, and, seen from the north of the choir, the tracing

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represents the three crosses, and suggests to the memory that scene on the hill of Calvary.

On the north, as well as on the south side, there are two aisles between the chancel and transept, which were also used as side chapels. The outer corner of the first has been replaced by a wall of modern masonry. From this point looking westward the fine sharp pointed arch of the north aisle (which is narrower than the south aisle) cannot fail to attract attention. From the second aisle, which was a chapel dedicated to St Stephen, the statues of St Peter and St Paul, high on the west wall of the north transept, can very well be seen; St Peter to the right with book and keys, and St Paul on the left with a sword in front. Both they and their canopies are in a good state of preservation. Three pillars separate this aisle from the

NORTH TRANSEPT.

Placing your eye at the base of the centre pillar, and carrying it up to a little above the foliated capital, may be seen the likeness of a left hand lightly grasping a bunch of flowers. It forms the bracket for supporting the groins of the roof. Of this hand Lockhart has thus written:—"Were it cut off and placed among the Elgin Marbles, it would be kissed by the cognoscenti as one of the finest of them all. It would shame the whole gallery of Boissere's."

The lower door with circular arch in the north transept leads down to the sacristy by two steps. Partly concealed by the lower step is the tombstone of

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Johanna, queen of Alexander II. There is the following inscription:—

✠ Hic Iacet Johanna : d : Ross.

Traditionally this was called the wax cellar, where it is supposed the tapers and other things used in religious worship were kept. The other rounded doorway higher up in the wall to the left, and formerly reached by stairs, the marks of which are still seen on the western wall, was that by which the monks came into the church. An oblong niche in the north wall, one corner resting on the doorway last mentioned, is ornamented with running flowers of great beauty, and has fourteen pedestals for statuettes, and was said to have represented our Lord, the Twelve Apostles, and the Blessed Virgin.

This church, like all of the Cistercian Order, was dedicated to Mary.

NORTH AISLE.

The narrow north aisle is conspicuous for the neaness of the pointed roof, and the row of massive pillars from which it springs. The capitals of the pillars, the corbels, and the keystones of the roof, are all beautifully carved, and are as fresh as if the sculptor had newly laid down the chisel. They represent leaves, foliage, and flowers, and are most chasely executed. Just beyond the cloister door, which is reached immediately on entering the aisle, on the wall, is an ancient inscription, which Washington Irving so much admired; it reads thus,—

HEIR LYIS THE RACE
OF YE HOVS OF ZAIR.

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Directly opposite this inscription, in the north aisle, are seen the tombs of the ancient family of Karr, Kerr, Ker, &c., of Kippilaw.*

THE CLOISTERS.

The cloisters formed a quadrangle on the north-west side of the church. The door of entrance from the cloisters to the church is on the north side, close by the west wall of the transept, and is exquisitely carved. The foliage upon the capitals of the pilasters on each side is so finely executed, that a straw may be passed through the interstices between the stalks and the leaves. It was through this door the aged monk in the "Lay" is said to have conducted Sir William of Deloraine, when he came at the request of the Lady of Buccleuch to take the Book from the grave of the Wizard. The chasteness and beauty of the carving in the cloisters is greatly admired. In the Gothic nature is profusely imitated, and hence the endless variety and beauty of the designs. In the ornamental frieze running along above the arches of the east wall, no two of the ornamental figures are alike; roses and lilies, and thistles and ferns, and heaths in all their varieties, and oak leaves and ash leaves, and a thousand beautiful shapes besides, are chiselled with such inimitable accuracy, and such grace of nature, that cannot be surpassed. We cannot do better than again quote from Mr Lockhart:—"There is one cloister in particular, along the whole length of which there runs a cornice of flowers and plants, entirely unrivalled, to

* See Appendix.

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my mind, by anything elsewhere extant. I do not say in Gothic architecture merely, but in any architecture whatever." At the top of the east wall, at the corner of the building, is the likeness of the figure of an angel in the act of flying away with a message from the church; and about five feet to the right of this is represented the head of a negro, grinning with unmistakable satisfaction and delight. The roof that covered the cloister stalls is quite gone. Two rows of holes in the walls, east and south, show how the roof has been supported, and most probably was very much like that now to be seen at Westminster Abbey. Seven of the stalls which were used by the higher dignitaries of the church still remain; these are covered by a panelled arcade of great beauty. Beyond the arch, west from the doorway, is an undivided seat, which was used by the common monks. The ornamented arch at the west end of this seat is supposed to have been the centre of the range. From this point, looking through the upright windows high in the wall that bounds the cloisters on the east, a fine view is obtained of the ornamented clerestory windows in the east wall of the north transept. There is less in the cloisters to divert the eye than elsewhere, and the beholder's sense of ruin and desolation is consequently greater there than in any other part in or about the Abbey. It would appear that the stones of the floor in front of the seats cover the ashes of many of the departed.

> "The pillared arches were over their head—
> Beneath their feet were the bones of the dead."

Within the Abbey lie the remains of many a gallant

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warrior and venerable priest, and it would be difficult indeed to say whereabouts in the Abbey the dead have not been buried.

From the cloisters, the ornamentation on the only portion of the central tower now standing can best be seen. It is said that Oliver Cromwell, from the heights of Gattonside, on the opposite side of the Tweed, attacked the Abbey with his cannon. By some this is not thought so; but whether true or not, there are certainly marks on the north wall that would very well bear out the supposition. Re-entering by the "steel-clenched postern" of the "Lay," this entrance to the church was in ancient times called the Valley Gate. Queen Victoria, escorted by the late noble proprietor of the Abbey, His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch, came into the Abbey by this entrance, and the flower-bordered walk leading north from the cloisters has since been called the Queen's Walk.

Crossing the church to the grand south entrance, the visitor cannot help being impressed with all the beautiful surroundings. The flying buttresses, the pillared arches, and the pillars themselves, like bundles of lances which garlands have bound; the windows with their rich and varied tracery, some with grand flowing lines branching out into beautiful shapes and forms, others with their foliaged tracery,—combine to make the scene imposing and sublime to any reflecting mind.

THE EXTERIOR VIEW.

Entering the burial-ground through the grand south entrance, the visitor should turn to the right, and go

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to the extreme end of the building. On the last buttress, where the ruin ends abruptly (for undoubtedly it reached much farther west in its original state), are the Royal Arms of Scotland, the date upon which is 1505; on the bracket for a statue above there can be seen the letters I.H.S. ("Jesus the Saviour of men"). Passing on to the east, there are other coats of arms, which adorn the buttresses. Opposite the fifth window, and enclosed by an iron railing, is the tomb of Sir David Brewster, with the beautiful inscription,—

"THE LORD IS MY LIGHT,"

which was chosen by Sir David himself. One of the most beautiful niches is on the side of a pinnacle over the west end of the nave; the canopy is the representation of a temple, under which stands the image of the Virgin Mary, with the child Jesus in her arms. Tradition says that, in 1649, when the person employed to destroy the statuary struck at this stone, a piece of it fell and hurt his arm, and he was disabled ever afterwards. On the next pinnacle to that is the effigy of St Andrew. It is said that there were formerly seventy statues within and without the Abbey. The tower stair runs up the corner formed by the nave and south transept, and is octagonal in form, pierced with niches, and ornamented with some very curious figures; at the upper cornice are beautiful flowers, and faces with leaves in their mouths, and the pinnacle is ornamented to the very top. The bracket of the under niche, on the buttress facing the west, beside this tower, which is much admired by the curious, consists of two figures, representing the blind carry-

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ing the lame, the lame seemingly in great pain from his position. On the buttress west of the south entrance the pedestal of the lower niche is supported by an earnest-looking monk, holding a scroll, with this inscription,—

Cu: Venit: Jes: Seq: Cessabit: Umbra.

("When comes Jesus the Mediator, darkness will cease").

Over the centre of the doorway, bearing this inscription, Ecce filius Dei ("Behold the Son of God"), is a half-length effigy of St John the Baptist, and under this are seen the Royal Arms of Scotland. At the spring of the arch of the grand south window are two finely carved busts, from which a chain rises and terminates in a face at the very top of the edifice. On the buttress east from the doorway there is an aged monk, holding an inscription, which reads thus,—

Passus: e: q: Ipse: Volvit:

("He suffered, because He Himself willed it").

On the adjoining buttress east from this is the figure of a monk, with a placid-looking countenance, the right hand up to the ear, and a rosary in the left. Westward from the south entrance are eight windows, all of which, excepting the one next the tower stair, have a carved head at the spring of the arch on each side. The windows eastward are more highly ornamented, some having figures of saints richly dressed; and at the sides of the windows of the transept facing the east are figures of musicians, with very pleasing countenances, playing on different kinds of instru-

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ments, among which the guitar is conspicuous. The canopies on the buttresses here should receive particular attention, so beautifully and chastely are they carved, and so great is their variety.

In approaching the grand east window, the visitor is less intent on the ornamentation, which abounds everywhere, than in hastening to gaze on the beautiful window itself. When it is at all possible the early part of the day is best for viewing this window, and the best point of observation of the exterior is about forty yards from the ruin. The two sitting figures above the arch, with an open crown over their heads, are said to represent David I. and his Queen Matilda.

The best view of the Abbey is obtained from the south-east corner of the churchyard; but,

"If thou would'st view fair Melrose aright,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight;
For the gay beams of lightsome day
Gild, but to flout, the ruins grey.
When the broken arches are black in night,
And each shafted oriel glimmers white;
Where the cold light's uncertain shower
Streams on the ruin'd central tower;
When buttress and buttress, alternately,
Seem framed of ebon and ivory;
When silver edges the imagery,
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die;
When distant Tweed is heard to rave,
And the owlet to hoot o'er the dead man's grave,
Then go—but go alone the while—
Then view St David's ruin'd pile;
And, home returning, soothly swear,
Was never scene so sad and fair!" *

* Sir Walter Scott.

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About midway to this view is a small red tombstone, erected on a base of the same colour. It is old, and upon it are the following singularly beautiful lines :—

THE EARTH GOETH ON THE EARTH,
GLIST'RING LIKE GOLD ;
THE EARTH GOES TO THE EARTH
SOONER THAN IT WOLD ;
THE EARTH BUILDS ON THE EARTH
CASTLES AND TOWERS ;
THE EARTH SAYS TO THE EARTH,
ALL SHALL BE OURS.

The inscription is of a much earlier date than that on the opposite side of the stone. A short distance to the left from this is a large red tombstone, erected to the memory of Thomas Purdie (by Sir Walter Scott), in memory of his faithful and attached servant, who was formerly wood forester at Abbotsford. It bears the following simple but impressive inscription, written by his master :—

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE
OF
THE FAITHFUL
AND ATTACHED SERVICES
OF
TWENTY-TWO YEARS,
AND IN SORROW
FOR THE LOSS OF A HUMBLE
BUT SINCERE FRIEND,
THIS STONE WAS ERECTED
BY
SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.,
OF ABBOTSFORD.

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The inscription on the other side reads thus :—

HERE LIES THE BODY OF
THOMAS PURDIE,
WOOD FORESTER AT ABBOTSFORD,
WHO DIED 29TH OCTOBER 1829,
AGED SIXTY-TWO YEARS.

——:o:——

THOU HAST BEEN FAITHFUL OVER A FEW THINGS; I WILL MAKE THEE RULER OVER MANY THINGS.—Matthew xxv. 21.

The spectator, viewing the Abbey from the south-east extremity of the churchyard, has before him a sacred ruin, which was in ages gone by an object of unbounded admiration and reverence to the brave, the good, and the true of the land which Bruce rescued from the hand of the destroyer.

In and around those beautiful and sacred ruins lie at rest king and peasant, abbot and monk, priest and warrior, rich and poor,—all hushed and silent,—without any distinction, freed from the chains of earth; and

"There the wicked cease from troubling;
There the weary are at rest."

Returning to the Abbey, the visitor should keep to the south fence until opposite the grand south entrance. From this point is obtained the south view of the Abbey, and from here also can be studied to the best advantage the "Crown of Thorns" window. It will be noticed that the niches above the south window and on the adjoining buttresses and pinnacles are all empty, with the exception of two before mentioned. The niches on the buttresses on each side of the doorway and round the top of the grand south window

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in former times held the statues of our Lord and the Twelve Apostles. The zeal of the Scottish Reformers impelled them to pull down the statues. The exquisite canopies, however, are left; some of them as fresh and entire as if they had been finished but yesterday. Projecting from the eaves of the high roof, east from the St Andrew statue, is the famous gargoyle,—a pig playing on the bagpipes. The profile of the pig is seen from the Abbey gate.

The best interior view of the grand eastern window is at the extreme west end of the nave, near to the rood or organ screen. Through this screen is an arched doorway or porch, which is tastefully decorated with a miniature groined roof. The centre or keystone is finely carved, and represents the face of our Lord as the "Man of Sorrows."

HISTORICAL NOTES.

Melrose Abbey was founded in 1136 by David the First, and consecrated ten years afterwards with the greatest pomp and solemnity peculiar to the period (in 1146). It was granted by royal charter to the Cistercian Order of Monks, which had previously been instituted in France, on the Benedictine principles, and which order rapidly grew into a great community extending throughout every country in Europe.

In the charter occur these words:—

"I, David I., by the grace of God King of the Scots, ... have granted and given to God, and to St Mary of Melrose, and to the Monks of Rievalle serving God at that place, and to their successors, for a perpetual possession, the

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lands of Melrose, and the whole land of Eildon, and the whole land of Dernick, ... all the fruits, and pasture, and timber in my land, and in the forest of Selkirk and Traquair, and between Gala and Leader water, besides both the fishery on the Tweed everywhere, on this side of the river as on mine. . . . . I have given and confirmed to them, in addition, the whole land and pasture of Gattonside."

The Monastery at Melrose was a mother church to all of the Cistercian Order in Scotland. The monks were of the reformed class called Cistercians, and were brought from the Abbey of Rievalle in the North Riding of Yorkshire, and were the first of this order who came into Scotland. "Richard" was the first Abbot of Melrose, and he appears to have been a man of strict piety and integrity, and also a rigid disciplinarian.

In Edward II.'s retreat from Scotland in 1322 the English wreaked their vengeance on religious houses, and they despoiled the fine shrine of Melrose. In 1326 King Robert Bruce made a grant to the Abbot of Melrose of £2,000 sterling in order to repair the Abbey. The sum is equal to £50,000 of the money of the present day. By this it shows that the church itself had been destroyed, and it is to this destruction that we owe the exceeding beauty of the ruin; for when the church of St Mary was restored, the Gothic style of architecture had reached its finest development. The present beautiful fabric, which is still the object of general admiration in its ruins, was then raised in a style of graceful magnificence, and still delights the eye of every beholder.

In the year 1384 the English, under Richard II., made an inroad to Scotland, and on their return

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the king lodged one night in the Abbey, and when he left in the morning set fire to it. He made several grants to the Abbey afterwards, which leads us to hope that his majesty repented of his ingratitude and sacrilege. Probably the chancel of the church was destroyed at that time, for the style of architecture there is later than in other portions of the sacred edifice; it is the Perpendicular Gothic, which commenced in the reign of Richard II. The stone used in this part of the building is different from that in the transept. The transept may well be considered as the oldest portion of what now comprises Melrose Abbey.

The English, under Sir Ralph Evers (sent by Henry VIII.), in 1544, penetrated to Melrose, where they vented their spite on the beautiful old Abbey and the tombs of the Douglases within it. After burning Melrose Sir Ralph Evers turned down the Tweed, being followed by Arran and Angus, who had recollected their forces behind the Eildon Hills. A battle was fought on Ancrum Moor. Eight hundred of the English were killed, and a thousand maimed and wounded taken prisoners. The joy of the Scots was great when they found amongst the dead the bodies of Evers and Latoun, who were buried here in the Abbey.

In 1545 the monastery of Melrose was destroyed by the Earl of Hertford. There is a tradition that the English, on their way back to England at that time, had actually passed the monasteries of Melrose and Dryburgh, when the bells at one of these places were rung to express the joy of the inmates. The

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English heard the sound, and were not slow to come back, when the joy was changed into mourning. At the period of the Reformation it suffered severely, and the Abbey never recovered from the destruction perpetrated at that time.

After the Reformation James Douglas, commendator, took down a great part of the ruin to build a house, which may still be seen north of the cloisters. The date on one of the windows is 1590. The statues were demolished in 1649; and for a long period the Abbey was used as a quarry by the people of Melrose. It is said that there is not an old house in the town but has in its walls a stone from the Abbey. Part of the lands belonging to the Abbey were granted by charter to Walter Scott, Earl of Buccleuch; and his descendants, about the beginning of the eighteenth century, acquired by purchase the remainder of the Abbey lands included in the lordship of Melrose.

Since the Abbey came into the possession of the noble house of Buccleuch, much has been, and is being done, to keep the ruin from further decay; and Scotland has every reason to be proud and gratified, that so magnificent and venerable a ruin should have fallen into the care of such good hands.

The monastic buildings were all on the north side of the Church. The wall enclosing the precincts of the monastery was more than a mile in circumference; and it is more than probable that the Abbey was over a hundred years in building before it was quite finished.

In the centre of the town stands a cross, about twenty feet high, said to be coeval with the Abbey.

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The rules of the Cistercian Order were strict, and for a long period were rigidly enforced. Their lives and manners were adorned with great simplicity. David I., by royal charter, gave them lands, forests, and rights of fishing, which was afterwards confirmed by his son Prince Henry. David I. was commonly called St David, on account of his piety. He began to reign in 1124, and was not only a valiant and honourable, but also a religious prince. History says that he founded (as well as Melrose) the Abbeys of Holyrood, Kelso, Dryburgh, Jedburgh, Newbattle, Kinloss, and Dunfermline,—the latter in which he is buried, having died at Carlisle in his twenty-ninth year.

Large portions of the Crown lands were transferred to the abbacies by the king, and the nobles, stimulated by his example, vied with each other in their gifts to Melrose, and in a very short time the monastery became wealthy, and enjoyed a princely revenue.

The Cistercians were great promoters of learning by all means in their power, and the transcribing of books was one of their chief occupations. The monasteries undoubtedly have done good work, and been the repositories of religion, as well as centres of learning. In their simplicity and primitiveness, the mission of these establishments were not such nurseries of evil as some writers would wish to make us believe. In these communities the inmates were skilled in botanical knowledge and the use of medicinal plants; and it is said that, at Melrose in particular, they were noted for their courteous hospitality to rich and poor alike.

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APPENDIX.

Inscriptions on tombstones opposite the door of the cloisters :—

Here lyes Levtanant Collonel Andrew Ker of Kippilaw who was born at Melrose the 23 February 1620. years and died at Kippilaw upon 3. February 1697. in the 77 year of his age. And. his. only. son. Andrew. Ker. of Kippilaw. Writer to the Signet. who. died. the first. day. of. October 1744. aged 85. years.

Here. lyes. Elisabeth Karr daughter of Liutenant Collonel. Andrew. Karr. of Kippilaw. who. died. the 27 day. of. March 1703. in the 20 year. of. her. age. Here also lieth the remains of John and Margaret Karr son and daughter of Andrew Karr of Kippilaw the former died at Kelso. the 10th October 1746 aged years and the latter at Edinburgh the 8th March 1782 aged 88 years.

Close to these tombstones is one of a more modern date, with inscriptions as follows :—

Sacred to the memory of Alicia Catherine, the Beloved Daughter of Andrew and Alicia Anne Seton Karr of Kippilaw, who departed this life on 24th of September 1794. aged 10 years.

Also to the memory of Anna Douglas. the Beloved Wife. of the Reverend John Seaton Karr of Kippilaw, who died 10 October. 1866. Aged 53. years. And of the Reverend John Seaton Karr of Kippilaw. who died 26th February. 1884. aged 70 years.

Also of Edith Eliza dearley Beloved Wife. of Henry Seaton Karr of Kippilaw, who died 30th November. 1884. Aged 24 years.

"I know that my Redeemer liveth."

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MEASUREMENTS.

Length of the Ruin, 258 feet; Breadth, 75 feet.
Length of Transept, 130 feet; Breadth, 44 feet.
Height of Remains of Tower, 84 feet.
Daylight of East Window, 36 feet by 16 feet.
Daylight of Grand South Window, 24 feet by 16 feet.
Breadth of Mullions, 8 inches.

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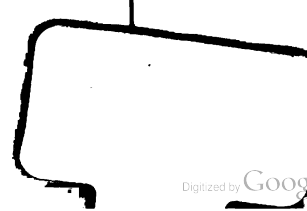

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